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their own organizations. The social workers believed the solution should be found through community agencies. Where the foreign leaders often regarded the community agencies as instruments to be used for the particular advantage of their people, the social workers naturally regarded them as the means whereby all the racial groups could be brought together. The foreign leaders usually expected the social workers to favor the members of the colony and to conceal from the agencies that employed them many of the existing evils. At the same time, they hesitated to take any stand against the members of the colony who were responsible for some of these evils. Because of these opposing tendencies, the club went to pieces after three years of useful existence. This same conflict is in evidence wherever these young people meet with the present leaders in the foreign colonies.

Though this group is best fitted to hasten the process of assimilation its peculiar value has as yet not been generally recognized.

Each group has its place and its share in the assimilation of the foreign born. Without the first group, the organizations and institutions established by the immigrants would go to pieces before their period of usefulness is past. The second proves that complete assimilation is possible, but not always desirable. The third group emphasizes the cultural contribution which our immigrants can make to America. The fourth suggests what these people, through their inherent ability, can accomplish when their handicaps are removed. The last group shows that the process of assimilation can be worked out from within if those capable of leadership could be given the opportunity to prepare themselves for this responsibility.

Elementary Education for Adults

By RUBY BAUGHMAN

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TO summarize briefly the activities of a department of immigrant education is not easy. The air is full of a whirl of words most of which we have made empty of meaning. Social education, vocational education, civic centers, Americanization, socialization, social service, community activities—all of these are interpreted by each individual according to his own peculiar altruistic point of view or selfish desire.

Yet, there are a few outstanding approaches to the task of defining the field of subject-matter and the learning process. Concerning the need of a common national language there can be no debate. That single task is no

small thing for a public school system to segregate from its numerous other obligations, and to undertake as a unit of endeavor. Surely the compact foreign possessions lying within our immediate national borders deserve much time and money and intelligent effort; a common language will be purchased at no small expenditure of the three. We are deluding ourselves in these present days by pleasant, platitudinous dissertations and theorizings about the task. Slogans and catch-phrases obviously valuable for political purposes are adopted. The work is something quite different: it involves an investment of intelligence, money and professional devotion over a long period

of years. Adults do not acquire a second language easily or in a short period of time.

The new social relations growing out of the final occupation of all the usable new land have complicated life for all of us. A great homeless wandering army of tramp labor has developed. Producer struggles with consumer; labor fights with employer; distribution struggles with production; organization nullifies initiative; racial group contends with adjacent racial jealousies; everybody is fighting somebody about something. And the only peaceable remedy (all the professional reformers to the contrary notwithstanding) is conference. There has been no way devised on earth among men whereby struggling humanity may settle its difference save only two—exhaustion by war and adjustment by conference.

Nationally speaking, this can not be done so long as the attempts to reconcile the diversified groups are based on mutual scorn and contempt; reconciliation must be derived rather from an intelligent comprehension. This need not attain to the strength of friendly understanding; a mere intellectual compilation of the issues at stake and the opposing points of view will suffice as an initial step. A problem clearly stated is half solved.

No adequate degree of such neighborly comprehension, however, can exist between American groups and immigrants in periods of storm and stress like the present for reasons easily apparent. Compelled by circumstances over which they have no control the newly arrived strangers tend to agglomerate into colonies. Alien groups are necessarily adjacent to American institutions, but not of them. For a very fundamental reason this occurs. The immigrant often appears dumb or stupid in the face of unaccustomed

surroundings. As a matter of fact he is something infinitely more pathetic and serious,—an intelligent human creature caught in the net of alien experiences which he does not comprehend and about which he may not ask, and concerning which his neighbors are prevented by one great obstacle from offering any explanation. That obstacle is the one thing that must be cleared away no matter what else may or may not be contributed to the general task of democratization.

To furnish this one first thing the nation has made no unified, comprehensive attempt. Indeed we have been so remiss that we have not only neglected the education in a common language so essential in a democracy, but we have also permitted the immigrant to form his ideas of our national life by contact with its worst phases. Trickery, chicanery, poverty, dirt, vice, governmental inadequacy, industrial instability, treachery to our government,—all these he finds expressed only too well. So seldom does he meet the organized forces in society that are struggling to right these conditions that he often arrives at the conclusion that those activities do not exist. The only avenue by which they may travel to him and through which he may arrive at them is the language of the country. That he must learn.

This process by which adults acquire a second language is educational. The nature of the process thus determines the social agency that must undertake the task. There is only one such agency in a democracy—the public school. If it is now inadequate to the task, then it must be rendered adequate. Even the most casual observer of the signs of the times can perceive that the public school must be about that business quickly.

The reduction of American-made adult illiteracy is a second piece of

work easily discernible by the observant educational eye. The American Government depends on the printed page of newspaper and magazines, pamphlet, dodger, circular and inquiry-blank as a means of dissemination of information and as a forum for public discussion. Immense geographical distances compel us to talk things over in print. There seems to be small question of the unwisdom of permitting any considerable number of citizens to be excluded from this discussion by their own illiteracy. We have deceived ourselves long enough by the specious argument that we take care of the home and the adults by looking well to the children in the public school. Statistics on every hand give us evidence of the need of a new point of view.

Out of this complexity and its consequent dehumanizing of both processes and persons grew the sad social isolation of which the public school stands indicted. Schoolhouses and teaching forces are too often in a neighborhood but not of it. Splendid educational palaces tower over the simple habitations of humble folk who receive most of their education in alley, or poolhall, or saloon, or corner grocery, or in even less innocent places. We admit it, but we do nothing about it.

The war hit educators and education between the eyes. It is still an open question whether the blow awakened or blinded. We discovered that education could no longer smugly count its successes by the number of adolescents studying integral calculus; that it must plumb its failure by the number of school graduates who can not make accurate change in a simple purchase. The focus of attention shifted from the expert in Greek declensions and in weak endings in Chaucerian verse to the man who can not sign his name to his pay check. Society, to a greater

degree than the crowd realizes, is at the present moment in the hands of this fumbling, clumsy-fingered, unlettered citizen. That is fair enough in a democracy, for he is the direct product of our national educational procedure. If we do not like his ways we must mend ours.

For the illiterate our schools are responsible directly; for the non-English-speaking citizen, only indirectly. They are both the task of the public school, not as charity patients, not as addenda, not as afterthoughts, but as a large constituent part of the huge plan by which we make over our concept of the business of education.

The organization of a department of immigrant education in 1916 segregated the activities that belong to the field of adult education in order that especial attention might be given to the problems arising in that new and uncharted phase of education. The elementary evening schools were included because they formed at that time the greater portion of the work with adults. A few sporadic experiments outside their limits with special day and evening classes indicated the lines along which development might be pursued.

The chief business of the department seemed clear: to devise means of placing within reach of all groups of both American and non-American persons adequate facilities for becoming familiar with American social, economic and civic institutions and ideals—not only with the ideals but also with the more or less satisfactory practice. The native born are separated from such a democratization process by insufficient and ineffective opportunity, by indifference and fatigue, and by inconvenient hours of labor; the foreign born add to these handicaps the barrier of language. To this immense number the public school of a democ-

racy that hopes to live owes a flexible, attractive, neighborly, simple, real educational advantage. The new adult education accepts the obligation to offer "training in any subject useful to any considerable number of citizens at any time and in any place best suited to the convenience of those citizens."

Concerning the method and manner of development of such opportunities there are two viewpoints. The one implies a wholesale proceeding which organizes a large number of schools and classes and the assignment of teachers from a general list in the hope that out of the great bulk some fractions may prove vital and permanent. The other viewpoint involves an analysis of each given district, an assignment of individual workers especially adapted to the peculiar tasks of that neighborhood, and an adjustment from time to time of all plans and procedure to varying social conditions. The first method makes at any given time a more brilliant showing especially when its initial steps are preceded by a noisy publicity campaign which draws students into classes in large numbers, and as quickly loses them. The second process is always in a process of construction or reconstruction; it suffers all the vicissitudes and variations of adult life because it is based deliberately on the needs and desires and changes of the adult life it presumes to attempt to serve.

The second path is the one followed: first, because it is valid; second, because it maintains the maximum of real activity at a minimum of expense. A simple, natural hence subtle manner of approach, an informal, non-mechanical, un-card-indexed, almost casual quality of development builds up classes and schools reasonably social, not too rigidly administered, yet effective in commanding the respect

of their community. Teachers peculiarly fitted and particularly trained for the work; an adaptation of subject and method to the actual needs and desires of the students; a quiet, systematic, continuous, cordial interpretation of the school to its community—these are the basis.

With this conception of their function the classes for adult wage-earners have thus far fallen into eight groups:

1. The night school, varied, however, in number of nights a week, in hours of meeting and in subject-matter as needs demand.

2. Special classes for mothers, American and foreign-born, meeting in schoolhouses at any hour of day or evening, any number of days a week.

3. Labor camp classes for foreign women in afternoon or morning and for men in the evening or at "off" hours.

4. "Factory classes" in paper mills, laundries, car barns, canneries, factories, Pullman cleaning departments, etc.

5. "Cottage" classes.

6. Classes in unusual locations like hospitals, jails, fire-stations, etc.

7. Boarding-house classes for groups of non-American laborers.

8. Community gatherings largely under local committee supervision and direction devoted to recreational, economic, civic or informational aims.

Several of these groups look at first glance much like each other but they are as a matter of social fact elementally different.

The social and industrial complexes of Southern California are literally that. In addition to the immigrant groups found in other sections of the country, the Mexican and the Oriental tangle the threads of race prejudice and commercial competition through the warp of integration. Furthermore, there are rotations of seasonal

employment and unemployment and spasms of over employment, which lack utterly the correctives found in more varied or less varied industrial communities. The local processes of adjustment are peculiarly matters of education.

For instance, the groups of Mexican citrus fruit workers who understand one process—packing by way of illustration—must be taught not only the English vernacular of their own familiar process but they do well also to learn the existence of other related processes of growing, cultivating, pruning, picking and irrigating. By a slow growth of comprehension and desire the unskilled laborer takes on a seasonal program of labor which leads definitely to a practice of thrift, home-owning and identification with his community.

The Industrial Relations department of the Fruit Growers' Exchange have recently issued for the use of their employes a textbook of lessons in industrial English, which is also a compact description of the several processes using foreign laborers. The book was compiled by the supervisor of immigrant education in Los Angeles, and is used by teachers whose duties and relations to the community are rather strikingly a modern educational development. The teacher is hired partly by the local school boards and partly by the local association; she devotes her time to the labor camp, paying special attention to the house-mother and her problems and to camp recreation. Such correlations of function are a whole world removed from the old-line night school of the reactionary educator and employer, but the new idea fits very comfortably into the yawning holes of a sadly shattered, postwar economic situation. Five years of experimentation with labor camp and other industrial classes have

yielded a small measure at least of certainty concerning the safe and profitable lines of procedure.

Not all classes for wage-earners have been dependent on the initiative of the employer. The large and tremendously useful Labor Temple Evening High School, started three years ago in a small way as a summer elementary school, has developed steadily in purpose and accomplishment to its present scope.

There exists in Southern California, beside a regular seasonal ebb and flow, a large and directionless transient and semi-transient flood of both laboring and leisure population. There are numerous local and peculiar methods of "hiring and firing." There is a relative absence of congested industrial centers with not only their evil but also their good features. There are no slums in the eastern sense of the word. There is a semi-tropical climate with its inevitable relations to living and laboring conditions; the influx of none-too-healthy workers from more rigorous climates is only one of hundreds of such complications. There is a considerable mistrust—not to say distrust—in the feeling of many of the foreign groups due to lack of information or its misinterpretation. This is intensified by the national and international controversies in which they are interested or involved. A general postwar lack of equilibrium holds all these in solution.

In this confusion crises of intensity often develop through the importation of special labor groups for specific seasonal purposes, such as the picking of the cotton crop. These men come as human units; they are reckoned as units of labor. Many of them are refugees,—confused, harassed, helpless, resourceless, exploited, bewildered, alien. They bring a set of social values not so much higher or lower as

essentially different. The Mexican peon has found thrift only an unprofitable practice which made him eligible for further exploitation; why should he save? Ownership has never been included in his list of possibilities; how could he plan to own a shack on a city lot? He lacks temperament and experience in organization; how shall he comprehend his neighbors who excel in it? His home is the center of his universe; how shall he interpret a civilization of labor barracks, hotels, apartment houses and tenements? He is kindly, ingenious, amiable, strong in the elemental virtues; how shall he compete in a contest where the awards go to shrewdness and cunning? He has been brought, but he is not welcome. He is necessary, but that necessity is hateful both to the needy and to the needed. Education of an elemental type is the only road out of his plight but he does not know his need of it and his industrial foster nation has not perceived clearly that he must have it. Life has compelled him into standards of living which are a menace to any environment. He is powerless to alter them alone; his employer is too harassed by the acute problems attendant upon the successful issue of a new project like the introduction of cotton in a new country to give accurate attention to him or his troubles. Between the upper millstone of an engrossed employer and the nether millstone of a community that sees its social integrity threatened is ground the feckless human atom.

Neither this unskilled laborer nor any other adult alien can be fitted into any scheme of education by teachers who lack both training and temperament for the stupendous task. To build a corps of workers who have some notion of the technique of the business, general courses in immigration have been supplemented by spe-

cial courses in the University of Southern California and the Southern Branch of the University of California. The cumulative product of such training in the half decade since the supervisor of immigrant education gave the first course in immigrant education in what was then the Normal School is an incalculable good not only in its effect directly on all the conscious processes of the integration of the immigrant but also in its indirect relation to the liberalizing of all educational activities. So far as is possible in a city system the teachers have been selected for their personal fitness for their particular piece of work. They form a distinct group of marked type and quality. To them, as a matter of course, is the rather unusual result due.

Such teachers find, naturally, the available textbooks and other teaching materials hopelessly inadequate for even the simplest of the multiplicity of needs. Singly and in conferences and committees they developed no less than fifty separate distinctly excellent sets of lessons in different phases of English alone. Charts, flash cards, display devices, leaflets, drill materials for illiterate American groups, have been evolved, usually out of their own resources and at moments when they should have been playing.

As a result of this condition the department has found itself at every step of the work—but especially in beginning English—under a heavy load of obligation to the Director of the Elementary School Library and to her staff of assistants. Out of an already limited library space a workroom for teachers of adult classes has been given over. With meager facilities and a ridiculously small expenditure of money, the committee of teachers and principals in charge of the workroom has organized under the librarian's ex-

pert direction an orderly housing for an inchoate mass of experimental teaching equipment. The workroom rapidly became an informal conference center which contributed immeasurably to the growth of the individuals using it.

The type of assistance rendered by the librarians is indicative: 1. Advising teachers in their choice of text and reference books. 2. Recommending devices for housing materials in class rooms and cottages. 3. Instructing committees and conferences of teachers in expert method of mounting, filing, indexing and preserving unbound teaching paraphernalia. 4. Providing for the circulation of charts and similar devices on the same basis as books and pamphlets. 5. Actually contributing a large part of the picture material and discarded books for leaflets. 6. Guiding the professional reading of teachers by providing in easily available form current pamphlets, bibliographies and monographs not otherwise readily accessible. In a reactionary school system there is no place for such service.

This modern point of view and its simplicity of procedure is an important factor not only in the rehabilitation of the night school but also in the growth of work with foreign women—industrial workers and housemothers. The foreign woman, along with her humble spouse, has been the subject of a belectured sympathy almost maudlin; in her name executive committees and Americanization funds have been organized—funds expended in the maintenance of elegant offices, in large amounts for travelling and other administrative details—funds which should be expended directly on the simple approaches nearest to her interest.

One such means of approach is the "cottage." The comparatively splendid and immense school houses have proved to be overwhelmingly alien to

the great majority of foreign neighborhoods. The housemothers especially must be very gradually drawn to them or any other imposing place. So they have been attracted in groups first to modest, often dingy, little rooms or houses where they learn slowly to come out from the shell of shyness or fear or distrust or loneliness. School authorities have not yet found a method of recording these slow awakenings to a comprehension of the really neighborly intent (despite all the evidence to the contrary) of the great bulk of our native groups toward their foreign neighbors. School registers can show at best only the tabulations of names of the persons who have learned to laugh and play with their neighbors in these small, intimate, unforbidding gatherings, yet this utterly simple thing is the heart of all assimilative processes.

These tiny units of social aggregation are the electrons of all permanent community organization. This practice is, of course, at the opposite pole from the theory that community councils or other forms of group expression are developed by plastering a leader and a machinery of organization onto a district from the outside,—from the national capital, for example, or the national metropolis, or from the state capital. These tiny groups are first led by the slowest, simplest possible steps to a self-realization and a self-confidence; then they are led to join themselves—this also slowly and simply—to other similar neighboring social nuclei. The common meeting-place of several cottage groups is, in one instance, a library; in another case, it is the school house; in yet another it is a vacant store building. It is superfluous, perhaps, to say that these rather delicate and rare plants can hardly be grown in an old-fashioned school system and by old-fashioned school-

teachers who believe that public school conventions and traditions and school district boundary lines were fixed at the beginning of time to last unaltered through the life of the race.

In and out through this network of integration and assimilation, the home teacher weaves a thread of vital and personal contacts. She perhaps more

than any other one agency ties the homes of the neighborhood not only to the school and to each other but also to all the general civic and social agencies which those homes need. Like the function of the rehabilitated night school, like the growth of the cottage groups, her work is humanly simple because it is simply human.

The Education of the Illiterate Immigrant

By THOMAS E. FINEGAN, LL.D.

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AMERICA is now reaping the results of her failure to adopt a sound policy in dealing with the illiterate immigrant who has been welcomed to our shores for more than a century. From the beginning of our national life until 1882 there was no restriction whatever upon immigration into this country. Our doors were thrown wide open to all who desired to come. Through the enactment of a federal law in 1882, the Government undertook to establish a policy of selective immigration. This law had been greatly strengthened by enlarging the list of those denied the right of admission to the United States until that list included convicts, lunatics, idiots, those liable to become a public charge, contract laborers, persons suffering from a loathsome or contagious disease, polygamists, anarchists and prostitutes.

The subject of immigration has been one of extensive Congressional investigation. President Roosevelt presented the subject to Congress in broad, comprehensive messages, and laid down the general proposition that our immigration laws should be amended in a way that would enable the Government "to keep out all immigrants who will not make good American citizens."

In 1897 the immigration laws were vitally amended, the excluded classes were definitely described, and the authority and power of the Government officials dealing with immigration were materially enlarged. Notwithstanding all these efforts of the Government to restrict immigration, the number of immigrants coming into this country increased at a rapid rate, and in 1914 the number who came to America was 1,218,480.

There has, of course, been a constant increase in the number of illiterates among these newcomers until the number has assumed proportions which have proved a menace to the social, economic and political interests of the nation. During the year preceding the outbreak of the war, the number of illiterates increased in eighteen of the leading states of the country, including Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Illinois, California and Pennsylvania. An investigation by the State Superintendent of Prisons in the state of New York in 1914 showed that one-third of all the prisoners in the state prisons were aliens, and that one-half of these aliens, or one-sixth of all the prisoners in the state, were not able to read and write. The census of 1920 shows that the approximate